

[EXTERNAL] Alameda Point Historic District Design Guidelines for New Buildings (Item 4-C on 9-5-24 HAB agenda) (Item 5-B on Planning Board's 9-9-24 agenda –AAPS comments.

Dear Planning Board members:

The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS) presented the attached comments to the Historical Advisory Board at its September 5 meeting and requests the Planning Board to consider these comments at your September 9 meeting. We apologize that we do not expect to have an AAPS representative at the September 9 meeting to present the attached comments.

Note that the Guidelines page numbers referred to in the AAPS cover letter are to the printed page numbers, not the PDF page numbers. Also note that the document link in the cover letter is nonfunctional, but the document can be accessed using the same link provided in the Guidelines' Supplemental Questionnaire.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss these comments

Christopher Buckley, Chair

AAPS Preservation Action Committee

510-523-0411



September 5, 2024

(By electronic transmission)
Historical Advisory Board
City of Alameda
2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Subject: Revised Draft Alameda Point Design Guidelines for New Buildings (Item 4-C on HAB's 9-5-24 agenda).

Dear Boardmembers:

The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS) would like to thank the Historical Advisory Board and staff for incorporating into the revised draft Guidelines Comment #2 from our July 18, 2024 letter (attached) and the essential components of Comment #3. However, Comment #4's recommendation that there should still be a provision that infill development within the Historic District's Administrative Core reflect Moderne (or Federal Moderne) architecture is reflected only in the supplemental design review questionnaire. **We recommend that the supplemental questionnaire language be restated more prominently at the end of item 3 on page 4 of the non-redlined version, which is where the architectural reference appeared in the original June 6 draft.** The specific language could be a combination of the June 6 language and the questionnaire language and could read as follows:

The Guide found that the Administrative Core was the only sub-area with the predominant architectural style, which is Moderne. Projects located in the Administrative Core Sub-Area should reference the Moderne style of the Citywide Design Review Manual and the Federal Moderne style, shown here:

<https://www.denix.osd.mil/armypre1919-pchh/denix-files/sites/97/2023/09/The-Architecture-of-the-Department-of-Defense-A-MilitaryStyle-Guide-Report-2011-Legacy-10-129.pdf>

Note: The document in the above link uses "Art Moderne" rather than "Federal Moderne" to describe the architectural style of buildings such as those in the Administrative Core. Interestingly, it provides one of the Administrative Core buildings as an example of "Art Moderne".

In addition, there are several probable mistakes and ambiguities that should be addressed in the draft Guidelines. See attached marked up Guideline pages.

Thank you for the opportunity to Comment. Please contact me at (510) 523-0411 or cbuckleyAICP@att.net if you would like to discuss these Comments.

Sincerely,

Christopher Buckley, Chair
Preservation Action Committee
Alameda Architectural Preservation Society

Attachments:

1. July 18, 2024 AAPS letter
2. Marked up pages from the September 5, 2024 draft Guidelines

cc: Allen Tai, Steven Buckley, Henry Dong, Brian McGuire and David Sablan (by electronic transmission)
AAPS Board and Preservation Action Committee (by electronic transmission)



July 18, 2024

(By electronic transmission)
Historical Advisory Board
City of Alameda
2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Subject: Revised Draft Alameda Point Design Guidelines for New Buildings.

Dear Boardmembers:

The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS) has the following comments on the revised guidelines:

1. We would like to thank the Historical Advisory Board (HAB) and staff for incorporating one of our 6/6/24 recommendations into the revised draft.
2. Page 3, and the "Summary of Design Features" section replaces the term "character defining features" with "sympathetic design elements". "Character finding features" should be retained, since this term widely used in the context of the Secretary of Interior Standards and in historic preservation design discussions in general and is clearer and more precise than "sympathetic design elements".
3. Change the following revised text under "Purpose" on page 1 to read (the AAPS recommendations are shown in ~~double strikethrough~~ and double underline):

The main goal of these guidelines is to preserve the existing character of the NAS Historic District by requiring new development to reference the architectural styles and character defining features of contributors to the district. ~~However while avoiding mimicking those contributing structures. In other words,~~ new development should not be confused for being an original building to NAS Alameda, ~~while at the same.~~ New buildings ~~time it~~ while at the same time should not feel out of place and in conflict with the character of the surrounding buildings. This approach is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, which calls for new development impacting a historic resource to be compatible with historic resources while differentiating new buildings and additions from the original buildings.

4. In response to Historical Advisory Board (HAB) comments at the June 6 meeting, the revised draft removes the requirement that infill development in the historic district administrative core comply with the Streamline Moderne architectural style described in the Citywide Design Review Manual. The requirement was removed in response to HAB members request at the 6/6/24 meeting because the administrative core was originally developed in the Federal Moderne architectural style. AAPS's take that as used at the Alameda Point administrative core, there is minimal difference between Streamline Moderne and "Federal Moderne" and that there should still be a requirement that infill development reflect Moderne architecture in some form to give clear guidance to developers and architects.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact me at (510) 523-0411 or cbuckleyAICP@att.net if you would like to discuss these comments.

Sincerely,

Christopher Buckley, Chair
Preservation Action Committee
Alameda Architectural Preservation Society

cc: Allen Tai, Steven Buckley and David Sablan (by electronic transmission)
AAPS Board and Preservation Action Committee (by electronic transmission)

Summary of Design Features

1. Administrative Core

~~Sympathetic Design Elements~~ *Character-Defining Features*

Structural and Materials

- Smooth reinforced concrete surfaces
- Horizontal orientation
- Flat roofs
- Use of vertical elements for emphasis
- Use of curved elements for contrast

Windows and Doors

- Wood double-hung, two-over-two pattern
- Metal double-hung, two-over-two pattern
- Light wood doors
- Stacked windows

Elements and Features

- Continuous horizontal concrete bands quoin elements, used in wall panels separating windows.
- Columns – oval shape
- Cast stone ornamental figures
- “Stacked” features, usually windows
- Curved concrete canopies and entry elements
- Spiral staircases
- Concrete planters
- Concrete benches

2. Hangar Areas

Character Defining Features

Structural & Materials

- Smooth stucco surface above a tall concrete bulkhead
- Prominent quoin-like door pockets, integrated into the structure
- Rooftop monitors
- Grand interior hangar spaces w/office wings to either side

Windows and Doors

- Immense glazed segmental hangar doors
- Steel industrial sash w/awning-type openings
- Steel personnel doors w/ transoms

Elements and Features

- Copper flashing and roofing
- Decorative band at the fascia of hangar door pockets and above hangar doors

Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan

The Seaplane Lagoon Taxiway, located within the Hangars Sub-Area, is also a part of the Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan, which has its own design guidelines, which are incorporated here. Refer to sections 5.B, C and D of the Precise Plan for further guidance.

- New buildings between existing hangars shall be setback a minimum of 80' from existing hangars and limited to a maximum of 35' in height.
- Building placement shall be consistent with Figure 2. Buildings shall not be placed in areas designated "Character Defining Views." Buildings can be approved within areas designated "Other Views" through a Certificate of Approval from the Historical Advisory Board.

3. Shops Areas

Character Defining Features

Structural & Materials

- Drop-siding, v-groove siding, and flash wooden siding on wood frame buildings
- Smooth reinforced concrete surface
- Stucco siding
- Characteristic monitors
- Vertical accents at the entry

Windows and Doors

- Wooden industrial sash in all wood frame buildings
- Steel industrial sash in all concrete buildings

Elements and Features

- Incised concrete bands in wall panels between windows
- Strong vertical entry pavilion
- Curved entry
- Curved concrete canopy

4. Residential Area

Character Defining Features

Structural & Materials

- Stucco surface
- Hipped roof form
- Recessed porch on NCO house
- Two-story core with one-story wings form the officers' quarter buildings
- Attached garages in offices quarters

Flush?

Windows and Doors

- Two-over-two double-hung wooden sash
- Wooden and glass doors on officer's quarters; wood doors with side-lites in NCO quarters.

Elements and Features

- Solid porch supports with portholes, present on officers' quarters
- Column of windows to light the staircases in the officers' quarters
- Original copper gutters and downspouts*

WHAT DOES THIS REFER TO?

Main Street Neighborhood Specific Plan

The Residential Sub-Area is also fully located within the boundaries of the Main Street Neighborhood Specific Plan, adopted in 2017 and incorporated below.

- The size and height of new buildings should be of a similar or smaller scale so as not to overwhelm the historic buildings.
- New buildings should not be more than two stories (30 feet) in height in the infill areas beehive blocks or at the east end of the NCO Quarters on Corpus Christie Road.
- Set the heights of the foundation, floor levels, eaves, and upper roofline on a new building to be similar to the heights of those features on neighboring houses.
- Maintain a strong sense of the front façade plane.
- Minimize the perceived bulk and visual impact of a new building. Consider accommodating additional interior space through a rear wing that is not immediately visible from the street.
- New buildings should have a relatively simple roof form that references the forms found elsewhere in the Historic District. If a two-story building is planned, design the roof with a low pitch to reduce overall height and visual bulk.
- New residences should be compatible with historic architectural influences that area already found in the neighborhood. Consider the historic style precedents such as the stripped Neoclassical style with Moderne elements of the Big Whites and more utilitarian NCO Quarters within the Historic District when planning new buildings.
- If a contemporary design is desired, strive to blend it in with the neighborhood's existing aesthetic patterns and residential forms/massing.
- Historical design style building should have precedents in the neighborhood.
- Consider using stucco siding, as well as geometrical elements as a way to relate new buildings to the character of NAS Alameda's early Big Whites and NCO Quarters.
- Consider using the original Navy Building Color Palette both to repaint historic buildings and when constructing infill within the Historic District.
- Doors and porches should relate directly to the public realm and support the historic character
- Always place the primary entrance on the front façade (facing the street)
- Select door types that are compatible with the building style and overall character of the neighborhood.
- Consider incorporating a first-story porch into a new building design, reflecting the character of the Big Whites and NCO Quarters in the Historic District.
- If a porch design is being developed, select a roof form that relates to the roof of the overall building. Porches can also be recessed behind the front façade plane, if appropriate to the new building's design.